

Intervention: Maternal care practices

Finding: Sufficient evidence for effectiveness

Potential partners to undertake the intervention:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofits or local coalitions | <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses or labor organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schools or universities | <input type="checkbox"/> Media |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health care providers | <input type="checkbox"/> Local public health departments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State public health departments | <input type="checkbox"/> Policymakers |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hospitals, clinics or managed care organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Background:

Maternal care practices related to breastfeeding take place during the hospital stay, including immediate prenatal care, labor and birthing, and postpartum care. Some maternal care practices are included in a hospital's written policy on breastfeeding, providing all staff (e.g., nurses, physicians, pharmacy staff) with education and training. Maternal care encourages early breastfeeding initiation, supports cue-based feeding, restricts supplements and pacifiers for breastfed infants, and provides for post-discharge follow-up.

Findings from the systematic reviews:

There is sufficient evidence that institutional changes, such as the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI), have effectively increased the initiation and duration of breastfeeding. The CDC found that birth facilities that have utilized BFHI practices have increased breastfeeding duration. Educating hospital staff also enhanced compliance with maternal care practices and increased rates. Additionally, institutional changes in maternity care practices effectively increased breastfeeding initiation rates and duration.

Limitations/Comments:

The recommendations in this priority area are largely informed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guide to Breastfeeding Interventions. Although the CDC report draws heavily on the reviews of the Cochrane Collaboration, a well-respected source of research in public health, its methodology for categorizing interventions is not outlined explicitly.

Additional information:

The Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative was established by the World Health Organization and UNICEF in 1971. For more information see the UNICEF Web site:

http://www.unicef.org/nutrition/index_24806.html.

References:

Shealy KR, Li R, Benton-Davis S, Grummer-Strawn LM. The CDC Guide to Breastfeeding Interventions. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2005. Available online at:

http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/breastfeeding_interventions.pdf